

## IN THE CLAIMS

**Please cancel claims 1-12 and 22-24.**

1-12 cancelled

13. A method of stabilizing a lumbar-sacral junction for fusion comprising:  
installing a foot portion of a plate partially into the anterior portion of intervertebral space between L5 and S1;  
installing screws from the front of the plate through holes in an upper portion of the plate into L5; and  
installing screws from the front of the foot portion of the plate downwardly through the foot portion and out the bottom of the foot portion into S1.

14. The method of claim 13 and further comprising:  
installing said downwardly-installed screws through the foot portion on convergent paths in S1.

15. The method of claim 14 and further comprising:  
extending said downwardly-installed screws through the S1-S2 junction.

16. The method of claim 14 and further comprising:  
seating the downwardly-installed screws in the plate and pulling L5 and S1 toward each other and compressing fusion material in said intervertebral space.

17. The method of claim 13 and further comprising:

seating a bottom surface of said foot portion atop the superior end plate of S1.

18. The method of claim 17 and further comprising:

engaging fusion material by the inferior end plate and superior end plate of L5 and S1, respectively, and

compressing fusion material between said end plates posterior to said foot portion in the L5-S1 junction while pulling L5 and S1 toward each other.

19. The method of claim 16 and further comprising:

providing anti-backout devices for said downwardly-installed screws.

20. The method of claim 13 and further comprising the steps of providing said screws with conical tapered head surfaces; and

installing an anti-backout screw with a conical head surface adapted to engage and interlock with the conical surfaces of the first-mentioned screws to prevent backout of the first-mentioned screws when the anti-backout screw is fixed in said plate.

21. The method of claim 20 and further comprising:

screwing the anti-backout screw tightly into engagement with the plate after installing the first-mentioned screws.

22-24 cancelled